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1975/11/06

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Authority NND 979820

Sy EE NARA Date 1/18/88

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 FM USLO PEKING

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

TO THE WHITE HOUSE

S E C R E T SENSITIVE/HANDLE VIA VOYAGER CHANNELS

PEKING 133 05 NOVEMBER 1975

FOR : SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: GEORGE BUSH

SUBJECT: THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT

THE MOOD IN OUR RECENT BRIEF MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHIAO KUAN-HUA HAS BEEN NOTICEABLY CHILLY. THERE HAS BEEN NO SMALL TALK AND NO RELAXED OPENING SENTENCES, ONLY "LET'S PROCEED WITH THE BUSINESS AT HAND." ON TUESDAY, CHIAO DELIVERED THE PRC REPLY DELAYING THE ADVANCE AND THE ANNOUNCEMENT AND OFFERED A SEEMINGLY GRATUITOUS LECTURE ON THE NEED FOR AIRING DIFFERENCES. HE REJECTED OUR COMMUNIQUE DRAFT OUT OF HAND, SAID AGAIN HE WOULD NOT CARE IF THERE WERE NO COMMUNIQUE, AND SEEMED TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE "WE HAVE TIME" THEME TO THE HOARY "YOU OWE US A DEBT." (HIS EMPHASIS ON THIS LAST POINT SEEMED CURIOUSLY OUT OF STEP WITH THAT OF CHAIRMAN MAO ON THE TAIWAN QUESTION.)

ALL THIS MAY MERELY BE TACTICAL POSTURING DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN THE PRC NEGOTIATING POSITION PRIOR TO THE VISIT. HOWEVER, I DOUBT THIS IS THE CASE, AND IT WOULD BE PRUDENT IN ANY CASE TO ASSUME THAT THE CHINESE WILL EMPLOY SOME FAIRLY UNPLEASANT LANGUAGE, BOTH IN PUBLIC AND IN PRIVATE, DURING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. GIVEN THE PROBABLE COST AT HOME TO THE PRESIDENT FOR HAVING TO SUBJECT HIMSELF TO THIS AND THE LIMITED LIKELIHOOD THAT THERE WILL BE ANY FORWARD MOVEMENT ON SINO-US RELATIONS, I WOULD INCLINE TOWARD POSTPONING THE VISIT IF THERE WERE A GENUINELY LEGITIMATE REASON TO DO SO. (AT THIS LATE DATE, OF COURSE, THIS SEEMS HIGHLY UNLIKELY AND I DO NOT ADVOCATE PUTTING THE VISIT OFF.)

THE QUESTION AT HAND IS HOW TO BEST RESPOND TO TOUGH CHINESE STATEMENTS ON THEIR VIEW OF THE WORLD SCENE, DETENTE, AND THE TAIWAN ISSUE IN A WAY THAT MINIMIZES THE DANGERS FOR THE PRESIDENT WITHOUT UNDULY DISTURBING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. I WOULD SUGGEST THE PRESIDENT COME ARMED WITH A GENERAL EXPOSITION OF US SUPPORT FOR THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE

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AND HOPES FOR THE WORLD--PEACE, FREEDOM, EQUALITY, ETC.-- AND OUR EFFORT TO AID THOSE GOALS WHICH HE COULD USE BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY. THIS WOULD NOT ONLY HAVE SOME PROPAGANDA VALUE, IT WOULD ALSO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE PRESIDENT FORMULATES US FOREIGN POLICY BASED ON HIS PERCEPTION OF RIGHT AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND NOT IN RESPONSE TO CHINESE CARPING ABOUT OUR POLICIES. PUBLIC CHINESE CRITICISM OF DETENTE COULD BE HANDLED AS A PORTION OF THE BANQUET TOAST, PERHAPS BY SHARPENING YOUR THEME THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS FOR MANY YEARS TAKEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE FIRM ACTION TO OPPOSE EXPANSIONISM RATHER THAN RELY ON INFLATED RHETORIC. IF THE CHINESE RAISE THE TAIWAN ISSUE ALONG THE LINES OF THEIR DRAFT COMMUNIQUE, I BELIEVE THE PRESIDENT WOULD HAVE TO RESPOND WITH A SLIGHTLY EMBROIDERED EXPOSITION OF OUR STAND IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE. IF THE CHINESE ESCALATE FURTHER BY OPENLY SUGGESTING THEY MAY USE MILITARY FORCE TO "LIBERATE" TAIWAN, IT SEEMS TO ME THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE PRESIDENT'S INSISTING THAT ANY SETTLEMENT WILL HAVE TO BE BY PEACEFUL MEANS. THE PRESIDENT CAN HARDLY AFFORD TO SUBJECT HIMSELF TO PUBLIC OR PRIVATE CHINESE TIRADES ON THESE CRITICAL ISSUES WITHOUT REPLYING IN SOME WAY, BUT WE SEE NO REASON TO SPEND OUR TIME MERELY RESPONDING TO THEIR STATEMENTS. WE SHOULD ALSO BE PREPARED TO REACT IF THE CHINESE DECIDE TO FEED THEIR LINE TO THE PRESS THROUGH THEIR UNDERLINGS. (IN THIS REGARD, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT SHORTLY AFTER THE NEWS OF SCHLESINGER'S DEPARTURE WAS CARRIED BY THE WIRE SERVICES, THE MFA PRESS MAN MA YU-CHEN GAVE A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT HERE A LENGTHY PEP TALK ON THE PRC'S GREAT RESPECT FOR SCHLESINGER AND IMPLIED THAT HE WAS THE ONLY PERSON IN THE USG WHO FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE SOVIET THREAT.)

GIVEN THE CURRENT CHINESE FROSTINESS, I THINK THE PRESIDENT IN BOTH HIS PRIVATE AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS SHOULD STRIVE TO LEAVE THE CHINESE LEADERS AND THE WORLD AUDIENCE WITH THE UNMISTAKABLE IMPRESSION THAT GERALD FORD IS A STRAIGHT-TALKING MAN, CONTEMPTUOUS OF OVERBLOWN RHETORIC, AND A MAN WHO SETS POLICY BASED ON OUR OWN VIEW OF WHAT IS RIGHT AND OF OUR INTERESTS. ALL SHOULD KNOW THAT THE PRESIDENT IS A GOOD DECENT MAN, BUT ONE WHO CAN BE TOUGH AS NAILS WITH THE SOVIETS, THE CHINESE, OR OTHERS WHEN NECESSARY. NEEDLESS TO SAY, HE (AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PARTY) SHOULD AVOID EFFUSIVE PRAISE OF THE CHINESE AND THEIR SYSTEM OR TOO MANY DIPLOMATIC NICETIES DURING BANQUET SPEECHES WHICH MAY BE IN ANSWER TO OR FOLLOWED BY CHINESE LECTURES ON THE POOR STATE OF THE WORLD AND AMERICAN IMPOTENCE.

WARM REGARDS

GEORGE BUSH

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